

LEARNING ENGLISH: THE STAGES

Level of English Production	Student Characteristics and Needs	How Students Learn	Most Effective Language For Learning
Pre-production Generally lasts 1 to 3 months	Silent Period: No Speaking Responds to instructions and commands (e.g. <i>put on your coat</i>) Need for environments where they can understand teachers and peers	Learns by listening and watching Points, gestures, draws, or recreates something to show understanding	First Language
Early Production Generally lasts many weeks to several or many months	Speaks using one or two words Gives "yes" and "no" answers May mix languages (this is part of normal development) Need for environments where they can understand teachers and peers	Learns by listening, watching, and speaking using one or two words Points, gestures, draws, recreates, or responds to questions with one or two word answers to show understanding	First Language
Speech Emergence Generally lasts many months to a year or two years	Speaks using more than one or two words to express a thought and can retell a story or event Responds to open-ended questions Ready for formal reading and writing instruction in English Need for environments where they can understand teachers and peers	Begins to ask questions Utilizes basic literacy skills Participates in discussions and responds to questions using emerging syntactic structures (grammar)	First Language And Sheltered English
Intermediate Fluency May last several years	Ready for more advanced reading and writing instruction in English Needs considerable help with vocabulary development in math, science, and social studies	Utilizes more advanced literacy skills Builds on content learning through discussions using more advanced syntactic structures	Sheltered English
Fluency	Language and learning skills are comparable to that of a native English speaker in academic settings		English

Adapted from S. Krashen and T. Terrell, *The Natural Approach*, 1983.